



J. Alfred Pelland
sh

Germanization AND Americanization

COMPARED.

BY
CHARLES F. ST. LAURENT.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

[Shak., J. C., 3, 218.]

MONTREAL:
PUBLISHED BY C. F. ST. LAURENT.
1896.

Germanization and Americanization

COMPARED.

BY

CHARLES F. ST. LAURENT.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

[SHAK., J. C., 3, 218.]

MONTREAL :

PUBLISHED BY C. F. ST. LAURENT,

1896.

BX 1408

524

INTRODUCTION.

THE flux and reflux of national tides is like the ebb and flow of mighty oceans, the positive result of physical causes. The rise and the fall of the sea is subject to fixed laws, the disturbance of which would cause disaster. The ebb and the flow of national fluctuations is due to the physical action of governing power. Nations prosper or decay, pursuant to established laws of civil liberty or oppression. History is emphatic on this point. Grant to nations full liberty in the field of spiritual and material activity, and a marked advancement will manifest itself in either sphere. Subject nations to repressive measures, opposition, born of instinct, will antagonize encroachments. Commercial stagnation will retard prosperity and civilization; so it is in the spiritual world. Restrain religious liberty, spiritual stagnation follows. Deprive nationalities of their essential prerogatives, despair and despondency will stifle the voice of faith, and religion receives its death blow.

In this essay, building my arguments on the immovable rock of history, I shall endeavor to prove that the destiny of religion among French Canadians is in the hands of the Episcopate. The healthy expansion of the Church will be concurrent with the nature of the measures applied. The French Canadians, the surplus of wealth of the land of Jacques Cartier and Champlain, will either adorn the Church with its Christian virtues, or dress it in mourning attire,—pursuant to the policy of our Right Reverend Bishops. Experience shows that a repressive policy is at work against our national prerogatives, and already religion is saddened at the sight of a pending calamity. The monster of religious apostasy and schism is hydra-headed.

CHARLES F. ST. LAURENT.

COTE-DES-NEIGES,
MONTREAL, CAN., Feb. 14, 1896.

Germanization and Americanization Compared.

"He who is timid in asking invites refusal" (Hippol., Act IV., Sc. 2).

SOME years ago a Western priest, pious and erudite, applied skillfully the knife to the canker of uncanonical treatment of priests. He wielded his mighty pen against arbitrary power and the evils flowing therefrom. That he was successful in rooting out the undermining influence of despotism needs no elaborate discussion ; a simple perusal of the decrees of the III. Plenary Council of Baltimore is sufficient. The Council embodied in its legislation laws tending to abolish the abuse of power, against which the mighty canonical warrior alluded to above wielded the weapon of his intellect. The learned doctor, fully equipped with the instruments of Canon Law, and the higher law of charity and justice, was submissive to established authority. He was apprehensive that his disclosures would give birth to higher-handed exercise of Czarism, in its most odious and aggravated form ; still he braved the raging, fuming, and threatening monster with *sang-froid* born of an equitable cause. The justice of his undertaking necessarily involved the idea of success. Before sending his book on a mission of mercy, he challenged the world to show a phrase or line not in perfect accord with faith, morals, discipline, or Christian charity.

In this article I shall adopt the same respectful course of procedure, but never at the expense of truth and principles. Imputations and censures will be hurled at me. Overzealous readers will squeeze out interlineal meanings foreign to my mind ; in a word, they will torture and disfigure the most natural import of words to tax me with disrespect for authority. They will censure me on the plea that I am weakening ecclesiastical discipline. I solemnly protest against unwarrantable imputations. Strong I feel in the justice of my cause, and facts will see the

light of day. My aim is to defend injured religion, and remove the odium that is being cast on the Church. I shall establish that the French Canadians in the New England States are now, more than at any time past, the sweet victims of arbitrary power that cannot stand the test of Christian charity, justice, and tradition. Despotism is supreme in some sections; religion suffers; the disease of serfdom is assuming dangerous aspects.

The rulings of most New England Bishops, with a view of Americanizing the various nationalities in their respective dioceses, are tyrannical. They may, *in foro conscientiae*, believe in the efficiency of their rigorous and arbitrary policy, but their assumption is not in keeping with the impartial voice of history. In a recent issue of *The Review* of Chicago I have asserted that the nationality of peoples is the embodiment of traditions, customs, characteristics, peculiarities, woven together by the precious link of religion, language, and patriotism. These inseparable adjuncts are the pedestal on which nationality is seated. Patriotism is a part of a man's nature, at the first dawning of the intellect. But patriotism without religion cannot survive. Nations, like individuals, must be trained for freedom, for,

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

From this philosophical truth it follows that these radical factors, or component parts, must be eliminated before hoping to blend together, successfully, the heterogeneous elements into one homogeneous whole. All these essential, racial features must be eradicated from the very fibers of the Canadians before transforming them into full-fledged Americans. The assimilating or denationalizing process is the bone of contention. Right Reverend Bishops believe in the adoption of rigorous, repressive measures for the speedy Americanization of the French Canadians. We Canadians hold opposite views. History will vindicate, I think, our position when we draw a parallelism between the German and American process of assimilation. We cherish the idea that Divine Providence, that created nations with racial features, made the Church universal or Catholic. "Teach ye all nations." God, for their sake, will superintend

the process of coalition, if such process has a resting place in His mind. Can we fathom the secrets of the Almighty? Is it the will of uncreated Wisdom to destroy his works? He chastises with destruction peoples obdurate in sin, but never a healthy nation. History is concurrent. Why anticipate the unfathomable, incomprehensible, unrevealed designs of Providence? Such an attempt is rash, and cannot command attention. Apart from the religious aspect of the question, viewed *a priori*, there is an objective side.

WHAT IS AMERICANIZATION?

Americanization is the material as well as moral assimilation of a people to the Americans; *i. e.*, the progressive transformation of a people's ideas, morals, customs, language, and sentiments to those proper to the Americans; the loss of a people's national prerogatives on the one hand, and the assumption of American prerogatives on the other. For the proper intelligence of this important subject it is eminently wise to revert to history. This ever-living voice of rolling years will stamp the Americanizing process of our Right Reverend Bishops with the stigma of impolicy. Impartial history attests that assimilation is best effected by the adoption of a *laissez faire* policy. Nature is stubborn to oppression.

Under the hand of Augustus hundreds of lands and nationalities were commingled under the scepter of imperial unity. The prevailing sentiment was to absorb the manifold races, inhabiting the vast regions, into the majesty of Roman law, order, and citizenship. Gaul became interpenetrated with the law, language, customs, and civilization of the Sovereign City. Spain entered the circle of Roman power and thought; Northern Africa was perhaps more Latinized. The dissimilarity arising from conflicting races, customs, languages, was more and more softened down by the *laissez faire* policy, though never entirely removed.

Racial differences remained prominent; nevertheless, the many members were equally solicitous for the prosperity of central power. This external unity of feelings and sentiments is the outgrowth of an entirely internal one, with which no government, law, or order can be maintained. The empire, to

gain control and to bring to peaceful submission the hundreds of races, had to acknowledge and sanction the various forms of worship. Each nationality enjoyed the plenitude of liberty, worshiped their gods, pursuant to their racial customs and in their respective languages. They had priests of their nationality, and by them were educated in the language of their ancestors (Tertul. Apol., 24).

Most all Grecian as well as Roman writers of weight and influence maintain that these different races, for hundreds of years under the fostering care of Rome, retained in their breasts the force of patriotism, and in their hearts there lurked the ineradicable love of national characteristics, customs, and language. The fiber of the all-destructible time ground away to a considerable degree these national prerogatives, but they were never entirely obliterated. For over three hundred years the *laissez faire* policy could not eradicate the essentially racial features, although each nationality enjoyed, to the full, perfect freedom. From the above, I infer that assimilation is most efficient when nations are not subjected to the laws of restraint. The Roman Empire was fairly successful in Romanizing heterogeneous elements, simply because national susceptibilities, etc., were respected. Therefore the most productive process of transfusion is the policy of toleration. This opinion we Canadians cherish! Our national character demands liberty, cost what it may. Hence our attitude is indorsed by history, and fully tenable in the world of thought.

GERMANY AND THE ROMAN EMPIRE COMPARED.

Roman history shows that the *laissez faire* policy is productive of best results. Has Germany lent ready and willing ear to the teaching of history? Her own history bears an irrefragable proof. Germany adopted a repressive policy, and failed utterly.

For twenty-five years (1870 to 1895) Alsace and Lorraine have been the footstool of German pride and ambition. During that period several ministries were actively engaged in furthering their selfish motives. The Germanizing power of the Empire was brought to bear against the orphan daughters

of France. The virility of Alsace and Lorraine withstood the joint efforts of Moeller, Bismarck, and Hohenlohe. Manteuffel's conduct toward the exiled, emphasizes the predominant merit of the *laissez faire* policy. The former were unjust, despotic, firm believers in the adage, "The end justifies the means;" the latter was scrupulously just and tolerant. Moeller and Bismarck were deadly foes of the provinces. Instead of Germanizing the Alsatians and Lorraines, they irritated the people to the pitch of madness. This feeling engendered *La Ligue Patriotique*, whose *raison d'être* is to withstand the combined Germanizing influence, and restore to France her cherished daughters. Nothing, says Mr. Wolff, gave such vitality to this society as the law of repressive measures, and notably the law of passports, which Germany unhappily adopted some years ago. This unwise measure undoubtedly threw back for years the Germanization of Alsace and Lorraine, and if persisted in, says Samuel Capper, might have been disastrous. The government was evidently defeated in its purpose. Mr. Wolff, probably the most competent archæologist, teaches that the extermination of language, national peculiarities, susceptibilities, customs, traditions, is an undertaking beyond the power of time; and the process of commingling will depend on the measures adopted. To prove his point he refers his readers to the history of Alsace and Lorraine. For three hundred years, when France took possession of Lorraine, all was German. Nobody could have been more exacting than the French were in suppressing Germanism. Measures of oppression were set at work in both provinces. Human ingenuity was exhausted to satisfy their sordid motives. France was under the intense heat of human ambition. Yet at the beginning of the last century, according to the unimpeachable testimony of Mr. Abel Hugo in the *Pays Messins*, "*La langue française était inconnue.*" Since a transformation has taken place, and Lorraines fancy themselves French, nevertheless the language is full of Germanism. In Alsace the French, for three hundred years, began with equal harshness, forbidding German speech, and commanded the suppression of all the elements essential to the German race. What was the result? "The Roman Catholic

bishops and priests interfered. They foresaw that the enforced use of the French language would of necessity lose them all hold upon their flocks." And thus to save the honor of religion, and preserve unity of faith, Alsace remained German and religion triumphed. The above fact is worthy of a lodging place in the mind of every Bishop in the United States. It gives French Canadians a foothold. The German system of dragooning, with a view of crushing Alsatian will, of Germanizing, produced an effect in direct opposition to the end intended,—another intrenchment behind which French Canadians may look, with confidence of final success, at the despairing manoeuvres of our racial enemies. Our position is impregnable. It would take a Joshua to master the situation. He was heaven-sent, to defend the works of Divine Wisdom : God is unchangeable ; hence our strength lies in God. Again history has a counterpart in the Prussianization of Rhineland. While Prussian rule represented to the Rhinelanders something distasteful, something by which they lost and did not gain, they remained demonstratively Prussians. As soon as they were given something to be Prussians for, commercial prosperity succeeded stagnation, society displayed Prussian features, though at no time entirely Prussianized. The same thing ought to be said of Bradanburghers. Does not impartial history condemn the blending process of American Bishops? Doubts relative to our resisting attitude toward religious Americanization have not a leg to stand on.

If human nature is human nature in any race, it is as much pre-eminent among the French Canadians as it was among the Swabians. These latter speak with affection of Count Manteuffel, who could not be trifled with by Prince Bismarck. They appreciated the kindness and toleration of Manteuffel. By his just treatment he could have won over to himself the sympathy of the people. His ministry was of a too short duration to produce lasting success. The Swabians know that they are Germans, and that they were Germans two centuries ago. It is only Prussian blood and iron which prevent them from yoking Germanism. This is the immediate result of repressive measures when applied to denationalize.

The mechanism of the transfusing process is imperfect ; the wheel of success is clogged. Rhinelanders, Saxons, Hamburgers, Nassorians, have grown zealous Prussians because a mild tolerating process, a *laissez faire* policy, was adopted, and gradually the blending process assumed concrete shape. National transformation is a cruel work ; it is a hateful example to set to a world which observes, and which occasionally visits, in after time. These are the views of Mr. Wolff. Assuredly if the work be cruel, denationalizers ought to be merciful and charitable toward the victims of national pride.

According to these learned men, Wolff and Capper, Germany has utterly failed in the ungrateful task of Germanizing Alsace and Lorraine. The apparent German features are irrelevant to Germanization. The present aspect is the outgrowth of German immigration, and not ascribable to the transformation of the national character of the unfortunate daughters of France. For twenty-five years Alsatians and Lorraines have gradually abandoned the provinces, located in the land of their love. The sweet souvenirs of childhood are sleepless and immortal. Their places have been filled by German peasants. Hence the German aspect of the provinces.

Who will dare to question the integrity of purpose of Mr. Puttkamer, Secretary of State, when he wrote in a state paper in 1885, after fifteen years of German control, "*Qu'il conteste entièrement que la population D'Alsace, Lorraine en soit arrivée au point d'avoir traversé les premières phases du travail d'assimilation à l'Empire et au peuple Allemand.*"

Mr. Preiss, January 31, 1895, gave vent to his feelings and convictions before the Reichstag : "Violence, brute force, and threats engender momentary passing apparent success ; but success to be of duration must have roots in the heart of the people. This lasting success is the outgrowth of patience, leniency, and prudence wedded to time,—the most powerful engine of national transformation. Unless Germany adopts a more liberal policy toward the rising generation, the people will become more and more rebel to assimilation." Is not the attitude of the French Canadians in the United States in refusing to submit to the assimilating process of religious American-

ization, concurrent with the inerrable voice of history? If history repeats itself, have we no reason to hope that the sun of success and expansion will dawn at a nigh future over our destiny? What was true at the time of Augustus, and what has been true since the Franco-Prussian war, will continue to be true. Rome succeeded by a *laissez faire* policy in casting into the mould of Roman unification hundreds of nationalities, and of imparting to each nation Roman aspects, features, and character, by pursuing a course not prejudicial to racial differences. Germany discarded the requirements of prudence, humanity, and justice, and failed in the Germanization of Alsace and Lorraine. German immigration is the only apparent vestige of success achieved.

CANADIAN HISTORY.

Corroborative evidence runs mountain high in the history of Canada. The stream of time is powerless to wash away the stains of bloody hands! The gigantic cataract of Niagara Falls is like a murmuring brook when appealed to to wash away to oblivion facts chronicled against England. This magnanimous little people have grown from infancy to manhood; have expanded with strength and vigor in spite of the poisonous breath of a jealous mother. Rebuked and forsaken by France, in time of adversity England adopted the unfortunate child. The lash of despotism and tyranny found a resting place on his lacerated body. His agonizing shrieks were buried in the waters of the majestic St. Lawrence! But why should I unfold our bleeding secrets? Why revive such heart-rending scenes? The souvenir of by-gone days spreads consternation in my heart. Well may I apply the words of Lord Byron before the passing ghost:—

“Once, twice, thrice repassed the thing of air,
 Or earth beneath, or heaven, or t’other place;
 And Juan gazed upon it with a stare,
 Yet could not speak or move; but, on its base
 As stands a statue, stood: he felt his hair
 Twine like a knot of snakes around his face;
 He taxed his tongue for words which were not granted
 To ask the reverend person what he wanted.”

Don Juan, Canto 16-23.

Canadians have been tossed to and fro ; beaten by the storm of persecution ; flogged when they murmured against inhuman treatment. Nights brought no peace to the mind nor repose to the body. Restless, and habitually in the realm of dreams, our forefathers "taxed their tongues for words which were not granted." The Acadians suffered beyond even conception. They wandered for years after their savage deportation, and to-day what does history say of their Americanization? Let us stifle the voice of history regarding the repressive, rigorous, barbaric measures adopted to Anglify them. May I be spared from such a humiliation !

Rameau, Casgrain, and Smith tell us that wherever the Acadians are found to-day they have preserved their religion, their customs, traditions, and language with a fidelity that makes them recognizable at sight. The history of Canada is an indestructible monument, showing the inefficiency of time, of repressive measures, to transform national prerogatives ; to eradicate these essential racial traits, and implant in the human heart the seed of assimilation. Throughout the Dominion of Canada, French Canadians are as loyal as their ancestors. Since Jacques Cartier and Champlain they clung, with courage born of virtue and patriotism, to their racial features ; so true it is that when they were made to feel the inevitable alternative of national apostasy or the assumption of arms, to protect their most sacred prerogatives, language, religion, customs, and traditions, they chose the musket and sword. The bloody fields of St. Charles, St. Denis, etc., hold in their bosoms the secrets of courage and love of national features. For hundreds of years French Canadians withstood the mad onslaught of the English Government. They resisted the assimilating power of the Crown chiefly because repressive measures were adopted to denationalize them. In proportion to the despotism of the measures resorted to, in the same did they rebel against Anglification. This incontestable result is our hope ! Strong with the history of nations, we have reason to hope that we will uphold the honor and dignity of our racial peculiarities against every assimilating power. We are a religious people, and conscience submits to the biddings of religion. We are loyal to

our ancestry, notwithstanding the adverse criticisms of "Cosmopolite" in the *Westminster Review* of January, 1896: "Even the French Canadians sank their nationality to promote the common cause . . ." Surely our present numerical strength amply refutes the crippled assertion of "Cosmopolite."

Let us now apply the findings of history, and compare our present position in the United States to that of the heterogeneous elements under Roman and German assimilating power. The foregoing pages prove conclusively:—

First.—That national characteristics, customs, language, traditions, are never entirely eradicated.

Second.—The process of assimilation is productive of best results when heterogeneous elements are granted full liberty; in fostering their national feelings they must not be hampered. Obstacles must be removed; their prerogatives must not be curtailed.

How does the light of history agree with the attitude of the Right Reverend Bishops of the United States, who are leaving no stone unturned to Americanize the French Canadians of their respective dioceses? Are the good Bishops curtailing our national prerogatives? With emphasis I answer, Yes; clergy and laity suffer alike in their respective sphere of action. Crushed beneath the yoke of servitude, we gasp for breath of liberty. We justly demand to be placed on an equal footing with other nationalities; rebuttal is our reward. With all due respect for the Right Reverend Bishops, I must air our griefs and demand redress. . . . I challenge any man, bishop, priest, or layman, to prove that my charges against the Episcopate are unfounded. I stand ready to establish the charges if requested by responsible parties. Spare me of such deplorable work!

I am profoundly Catholic; so is my family! I have at heart the good of religion. Were I not convinced of Arbitrary Power, despotism, I would hold my feeble voice in abeyance. So flagrant is the abuse that conscience bids me speak.

I formulate our grievances in a categorical form, to show that Right Reverend Bishops pursue, in their Americanizing process, a course identical to that of the Germans against Alsace and Lorraine; consequently disaster for religion must inevitably ensue. Repressive measures invite defeat.

GRIEVANCES BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

First.—Some Bishops retain, in the vicariate field, young Canadian priests from three to six years, when, *coeteris paribus*, young Irish priests are promoted to pastoral duties after one year's service, and sometimes less.

Second.—Some Bishops prefer and do intrust to some Irish priests, knowing very little French, congregations sometimes exclusively French, and most always mixed congregations, when the large majority is French. This proposition is emphasized by New England Bishops.

Third.—Some Bishops have sworn allegiance to the policy of never appointing French priests (knowing thoroughly the English language) over parishes equally divided with reference to nationality. This proposition is emphasized in the New England States, to the detriment of Canadian priests who have had more service in the diocese than their lucky *confrères*. Some Bishops, despite the vote of the clergy to the contrary, keep the same Canadian Councilors, whose tendency inclines toward National Apostasy.

Fourth.—Some Bishops compel Canadian priests, knowing little or no English, to attend Diocesan Retreats, at which French is carefully eliminated. This state of things prevails in dioceses where the French clergy predominates in number.

Fifth.—Some Bishops surround themselves with priests hostile to Canadian priests; and as a necessary conclusion, the French Canadian clergy is habitually handicapped in their work of building, plans, and borrowing money, from which complications follow. This interference dampens the zeal of the clergy, and religion suffers.

Sixth.—Some Bishops are more exacting and imperative, etc., when they visit French parishes than when they are among their own people.

Seventh.—Some Bishops, on Episcopal visitation, content themselves with addressing very few words of French to exclusively Canadian congregations, making long addresses in English when understood by but a few.

Eighth.—Some Bishops commit to French priests the ungrateful task of building up parishes, which later on become

the legacy of Irish priests. This is quite general in the New England States. A retrospect view proves the point.

Ninth.—Some Bishops have little sympathy for Canadian priests and laity. Priests, at Ecclesiastical Conferences, are requested to speak Latin, when their mother tongue is not English. This discrimination is unjust, and shows a despotic spirit on the part of the Ordinary.

Tenth.—Some Bishops, abetted by their clergy, are determined to exterminate the French language. To bring to a successful issue their repressive policy, mixed parishes are invariably given to Irish priests, who refuse to have French taught in the parochial schools. Sometimes these schools cost French priests their very lives. Catechism is also taught in English, and to my knowledge several priests reject, for first communion, French children who cannot answer catechism in English. This is contrary to all laws of the Church.

Eleventh.—Some Bishops, to pacify irritated Canadians demanding redress of grievances, send them a French priest to their Irish pastor. This yoking together of a young French priest with an old Irishman, is often a torture for the former. (Counterpart of St. Lawrence, A. D. 258.)

Twelfth.—Some Bishops apply seminary collections to send Irish students to Europe for theological training, to the detriment of French Canadian subjects, who are not given a chance to learn English. They invariably receive their theological training in Canada, where no English is spoken. This discrimination is unfair.

Thirteenth.—Some Bishops discriminate against Canadian Colleges by refusing to recognize the efficiency of the teaching staff, and by compelling students to renew their course of philosophy in an institution of their choosing. It is a sad pretext for retarding their ordination.

Fourteenth.—Most of the Bishops of the Boston Province have resolved to Americanize the Canadians, cost what it may, and to supplant French priests by religious orders. Cold facts speak! Lowell, Haverhill, Lawrence, Boston, Lewiston, Fall River, etc., are truth-bearing. These are the largest French parishes in the United States.

In virtue of canonical legislation these religious orders become absolute masters of the situation for all times to come ; to the detriment of the French clergy, who must be contented with the crumbs falling from the Episcopal table.

Are not the above categorical grievances more than sufficient to weaken the faith, and sow at least the seed of dissension? What could I say of Fall River and Danielson ! How religion did and does suffer, and odium is cast upon religion and Church ! It is not my defined purpose to enter into details ; proof shall be adduced at the proper time, if my propositions are challenged.

If our Right Reverend Bishops persist in their arbitrary power toward us, a mortal wound will be inflicted to the expansion of religion. With the present unjust treatment we will grieve at the loss of our national clergy, fully in sympathy with our aspirations ; in touch with our schools, wherein we learn the language of our mothers. When despair and despondency overtake us, religious sentiments will be eradicated from our hearts ; and the Church will mourn the loss of hundreds of thousands of Catholics, engulfed in the whirlpool of schism. Our Protestant friends are actively engaged in devising means of proselytism.

Throughout the length and breadth of the Union, sectional shades are eliminated ; power is concentrated to conspire against us ; our destruction is their dream.

At the recent Baptist Convention held in Boston, resolutions were passed tending to estrange our French people from the fold. Without a dissenting voice the abolition of our maternal tongue was looked upon as most favorable and conducive to allure us away from our Church.

How can our Right Reverend Bishops look upon these portentous signs of the time without seeing the approaching storm? The atmosphere is pregnant with danger ! Our enemies are wide awake, embittering our strained relations with the Episcopate, and exasperating us to rebellion. We saw what would have occurred had not the French abolished their repressive measures against Alsace and Lorraine, as well as what would have occurred had not the clergy interfered to pac-

ify the Germans of the provinces against France. The clergy was in touch with the French policy, but rigorous measures, unjust treatment, culminated in the defeat of their pet scheme. Religion was on the verge of a dire calamity.

How can the Irish Episcopate of these United States expect to be successful in their Americanizing process, is an unfathomable secret! Same causes produce similar effects. Rigorous policy of denationalization has always proven abortive. Their policy of oppression must inevitably beget desolation, and ruin to the Church. They can never blend together Greeks and Latins, or *vice versa*. Pope Leo XIII., to bring about a reconciliation of the Oriental churches, does not propose that it should be accomplished by transfusing Greeks into Latins, or the Latins into Greeks. That is not the idea of catholicity. What the Pope wishes to impress in their hearts, is the fact that reconciliation can be brought about without either church sacrificing its ancient liturgies, local customs, outward methods of religion. The Pope does not want them to surrender their ancient heritage. Such a demand of surrender was the cause of schism; to heal the sores the cause must be removed.

Our Right Reverend Bishops are unmistakably preparing the path of schism, by compelling us to surrender our ancient heritage, language, customs, traditions, peculiarities, etc.

The Holy Father demands *universality*, and not *uniformity*. A universal quality is one common to many species and individuals, that may be otherwise very different from one another. Universality destroys nothing that belongs to normal vigor and growth; uniformity always does. Universality in religion is the agreement, in the essentials of faith, of all Christians of whatever race, language, or land.

Orientals will revert to the fold as soon as the Pope will have convinced them that they can become united to the Catholic Church without having to become Latins.

With due respect for our Right Reverend Bishops, the policy of Leo XIII. ought to be their guiding star. No rigorous measures should be adopted to make of Canadians, Irish Americans. Any oppressive policy will naturally induce us to coalesce our forces against the assimilating wave of national pride

and ambition. The success of their Americanizing campaign will wither; grow desparingly weak in proportion as we are provoked to surrender our ancient heritage. The most precious part of our heritage is language. It is the masterpiece to consolidate and perpetuate creation. Faith is the foundation of the Divine Edifice, without which we cannot please God. But "faith cometh by hearing," and hearing by the Word of God. The Word of God must be taught to all hearers. To enable His apostles to teach all nations, he gave them the plenitude of his gifts: "And they began to speak in divers tongues." Natural means being wanted to carry out the designs of God, "Go teach all nations," supernaturally they were supplied. It is absolutely necessary for the teacher to use the language of the taught, since language is the medium of communication between mind and mind. But it was not only at the birth of the Church that the miracle of tongues was witnessed: it has been repeated throughout all ages in favor of zealous missionaries, as is abundantly proved in the case of St. Francis Xavier, St. Paul of the Cross, and so many others.

Languages must hold a prominent place in the armory of the Church. Popes are always mindful of the injunction, "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep." The whole flock must be fed with the words of eternal life. For this, there is need of all the languages; for the flock is found in every country in the world. Why, the Church must make the study of languages a duty of primary importance to all aspirants to the sacred ministry, it being the very essence of her mission to teach all nations. The propaganda at Rome is the polyglot celebrity of the world; its work is cosmopolitan and civilizing. It is well known that there are thirty-two languages spoken there. Catholic missionaries have, at all times, learned the languages of the countries they went to evangelize and civilize. How different in these United States, where our Right Reverend Bishops are sparing no efforts to blend together all languages; *i. e.*, to abolish all languages that the English language may reign supreme. Their chief aim is to undo, under the garb of progress, advancement, the work of twenty centuries. Will not this century take care of itself? Divine Providence will see that

all nationalities are not deprived of the beneficent work of the Church. It is the will of our great Pope that our people, like all others, should serve God in the language of our ancestors, so thoroughly convinced is he of this proposition; *viz.*, that nationality is the bulwark of religion. The loss of nationality invariably incurs the loss of religion. May our Right Reverend Bishops be solicitous about the inerrable teachings of history. French Canadians, like all other races under the moulding influence of Rome or Berlin, will not submit to national apostasy. They will never surrender that national grandeur of which they are proud.

Were the American Episcopate to recognize our inalienable rights as a people and as Catholics,—give us priests in sympathy with our national aspirations, views, and sentiments, in harmony with our customs, traditions, language, and other essential features of our race,—the work of assimilation would be simplified a hundredfold. Better results would be attained, and the Church would grow and expand under the balmy, congenial breath of justice, equality, toleration, and religious freedom. Instead of losing ground she would proceed on her mission of mercy, and these United States might fall in the fold. I believe that the religion which rules America will rule the world, and that religion will be the religion of Rome. This religious condition will be the result of religious toleration.

The French Canadians are unlike Alsatians, Lorraines, and French of Louisiana. At present the German traits of the provinces, as well as the American aspect of Louisiana, are due not so much to the assimilating power of each country as to deplorable circumstances. The Alsatians and Lorraines leave the provinces through love for the mother country, France. When Louisiana was sold to the United States, French immigration ceased. How different with us Canadians in the United States! We are a round million strong. The irrigating stream of immigration is incessantly flowing. This land receives the fruits of our national expansion. Ever faithful to religion, the *crescite et multiplicamini* of Holy Writ has been scrupulously observed. The Canadian people are probably the most vigorous and prolific. Statistics will bear out my assertion.

There are traitors among our people, national apostates, but the blooming flower of Canadian immigration more than counterbalances our loss. Americanizers may win over weak and treacherous Canadians, but yearly gain surpasses our loss. The fire of patriotism is habitually enjoying the reviving breath of immigration. Our hopes for the future have a resting place on Canadian soil. The assimilating work of our Right Reverend Bishops has had a beginning, but what about the end? Canadians will incessantly immigrate to the United States, so the blending process will prove inadequate to transform us into Americans. Canadians we are to the very marrow of our bones, and as such we will remain. It is well for Americanizers to compare our destiny to that of the Germans. This healthy people is expanding in the West to the amazement of onlookers. They are magnanimous, strong-hearted, patriotic, proud of their national prerogatives. They have resisted, with success, assimilation. In times of peril they looked to Germany for reinforcement. Thousands of miles of water was no barrier to their national impulse. To-day they are masters of the West. No assimilating power can denationalize them. The Germans invite us to walk in their footsteps. We will march together in the path of success, with confidence. Providence rules over destinies. May you, Right Reverend Bishops of the United States, extend a generous and paternal grasp to all your spiritual children, be they from the North, South, East, or West.

The Church is Catholic, universal. I pledge you my word and honor that we Canadians, most respectful children of the Church, need not to be goaded and gored in the discharge of our duties as Catholics. Give us priests of our nationality, that will teach us, in our maternal tongue, the way to heaven; give us schools where our children will learn the language of our mothers; do not deprive us of our ancestral inheritance, and we will live and die practical Catholics. At the price of our very lives, if needs be, we shall protect and defend the Church against invasion. Let us enjoy the sacred privileges that barbarous times respected—I mean language, customs, traditions—and a rich harvest is in store for the Church in America.

If you curtail our national prerogatives, if you apply repressive measures to rob us of our ancestral heritage, despair and despondency will weaken our love for religion, and plunge us in the whirlpool of apostasy and schism. History repeats itself: *Causa causæ, causa causati.*

CHARLES F. ST. LAURENT.

COTE-DES-NEIGES,
MONTREAL,
P. Q.,
Feb. 14, 1896

